

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: SF, PFOR, PDIP

SUBJECT: SA AMBASSADOR'S CREDENTIAL PRESENTATION

1. THE NEW SOUTH AFRICAN AMBASSADOR, ROELOF F. BOTHA, PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS TO THE PRESIDENT ON SEPTEMBER 3. THEREFOLLOWS A CLEARED MEMORANDUM DESCRIBING THE CONVERSATION WHICH ENSUED. PARTICIPANTS WERE THE PRESIDENT, AMBASSADOR BOTHA AND THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS.

2. QUOTE. ON THE OCCASION OF THE PRESENTATION OF HIS CREDENTIALS AMBASSADOR BOTHA OPENED THE CONVERSATION BY CONVEYING PRIME MINISTER VORSTER'S GREETINGS TO PRESIDENT FORD, FOR WHICH THE PRESIDENT THANKED HIM.

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3. THE AMBASSADOR THEN GAVE THE PRESIDENT A BRIEF SUMMARY

OF SOUTH AFRICA'S EFFORTS OVER THE PAST YEAR TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH ITS BLACK NEIGHBORS. ON THE SUBJECT OF MOZAMBIQUE, AMBASSADOR BOTHA SAID THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAD TAKEN A POSITIVE STANCE, NOTWITHSTANDING THE INTERNAL POLITICAL COST. HE SAID RHODESIA, WHICH SOUTH AFRICA BELIEVES IS A BRITISH PROBLEM, IS DIFFICULT, BUT SOUTH AFRICA IS PLAYING THE CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IT MUST IF A SOLUTION IS TO BE FOUND. HE ADDED THAT PRIME MINISTER VORSTER WAS VERY SATISFIED WITH HIS MEETINGS WITH ZAMBIAN PRESIDENT KAUNDA.

TURNING TO NAMIBIA, AMBASSADOR BOTHA POINTED OUT THAT THE PRESENT CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE REPRESENTS THE FIRST TIME THAT BLACKS AND WHITES HAVE SAT DOWN TOGETHER TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF THE TERRITORY. HE FURTHER SAID THAT WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA ITSELF THERE HAVE BEEN MANY CHANGES IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BLACKS AND WHITES. HE EMPHASIZED THAT "THESE HAVE BEEN IMPORTANT CHANGES", AND NOT JUST WINDOW-DRESSING.

4. AMBASSADOR BOTHA WENT ON TO SAY THAT PRIME MINISTER VORSTER'S VISITS TO BLACK AFRICAN STATES HAVE PRODUCED "TREMENDOUS PROGRESS AND MOVEMENT." VORSTER HAS ALSO BEEN MEETING WITH BLACK LEADERS WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT SOUTH AFRICANS BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT GIVEN SOUTH AFRICA THE RECOGNITION AND CREDIT THAT "AMERICA COULD PERHAPS GIVE." HE SAID THAT WITH AMERICAN HELP SOUTH AFRICA HAS A REAL CHANCE TO ESTABLISH PEACE AND TO BRING THE SOUTH AFRICAN PEOPLE THEMSELVES TO CHANGE THEIR ATTITUDES. THE SUPPORT OF SOUTH AFRICA'S FRIENDS CAN BE A GREAT HELP. HE ADDED THAT WHILE IN THE PAST SOUTH AFRICA COULD DEAL ONLY WITH MALAWI, HE HAS FOUND IN HIS OWN EXPERIENCE AT THE UN THAT TWELVE BLACK AMBASSADORS WILL RECEIVE AND DEAL DISCREETLY WITH HIM.

5. AMBASSADOR BOTHA WENT ON TO NOTE THAT THE UNITED STATES IS THE LEADER OF THE WORLD, AND APPEALED TO THE PRESIDENT NOT TO "LEAVE SOUTH AFRICA IN THE LURCH", SAYING THAT WITH AMERICAN HELP SOUTH AFRICA CAN MAKE BETTER PROGRESS.

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6. THE PRESIDENT SAID HE WAS ENCOURAGED TO HEAR WHAT AMBASSADOR BOTHA HAD SAID, AND SUGGESTED THAT THE AMBASSADOR WOULD FIND IT USEFUL TO EXPLAIN TO THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WHAT IS BEING DONE IN HIS COUNTRY. HE NOTED THAT AMBASSADOR BOTHA HAD A BIG JOB TO DO. THE PRESIDENT WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE UNITED STATES AND SOUTH AFRICA OUGHT TO HAVE AND, HE HOPES, WILL HAVE A

GOOD RELATIONSHIP, AND THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAS A GOOD
RECORD OF "INDEPENDENCE AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT."
THE PRESIDENT REITERATED THAT THE AMBASSADOR WOULD BE
WELL ADVISED TO POINT OUT PROGRESS BEING MADE. IN THE
MEANTIME, HE HOPED AMBASSADOR BOTHA WOULD ENJOY HIS
RESPONSIBILITIES HERE AND THAT HE WOULD FIND US GLAD
TO WORK WITH HIM. UNQUOTE. KISSINGER

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